

I MUST

finally admit
to being jealous
of the crowds of
people i see
talking about nothing
as i sit alone
and read.

THE POWER OF CLICHE

I believe
every one
I hear.

I PEEL

the dead skin off my chest and arms
and place it in the ashtray to my
right,
as I smoke my cigarettes I dump the
ashes there as well, then putting
them out I burn the bits of
skin,
my own little holocaust.

LAZARUS

so I'm dead and up
in heaven. I'm talking to
Gabriel, who I'd heard of
many times before. there
seemed to be some confusion
about my being there. I was
anxious to get inside, but
Gabriel kept me at the
gates. every once in
a while another angel, or
less important page,
would come up and whisper
into his ear. a few times
he got on the big gold
phone and argued with some-
one on the other end.
with me he talked small
talk; asked me about
my wife and kids, how work
was, the weather and what
all.

I asked if there was a
problem and he just told
me to be patient.
I asked him nervously
if I was to be
sent to some other place.
he shook his head.
I asked him when I'd be
let in, when I could
see God, there were
a lot of questions I
had.
he told me to have a
seat, that everything
would be worked out
shortly.
I did what he said and
began thumbing idly
through a magazine.
Gabriel got on the phone
again and then disappeared.
after what seemed like an
eternity he came back
and mumbled something to me.
I asked him to repeat what
he'd said but just as he did
I felt a sucking sensation
through my body and heard
a loud POP!
I awoke in my death clothes,
the stink of days still on me,
disappointed to be back.

DANIEL

down there in the den
with all those lions and
all i could think
about was a nice fat
roast beef sandwich
and a beer, and to this day i am
still unsure why God spared me.
we have discussed it but
He just tells me, "I liked you
Daniel," and i guess